Reduction in fare of Palace on Wheels

277. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fare of Palace on Wheels, the luxury train, has been reduced recently;

(b) if so, the percentage of reduction therein;

(c) when this reduced fare became effective;

(d) whether this reduction has attracted more tourists; and

(e) the occupancy position before and after reduction in fares?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A discount of 25% of peak season tariff for the foreign tourists and a special tariff of Rs. 10,000/- per night per person for the Indian tourists have been given for the current season.

(c) The reduced fare has become effective from 2nd January, 2002.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The occupancy has gone up from 21% to 45% during the period.

Rail link to Karnataka cities

278. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many new rail lines, connecting major cities of Karnataka with neighbouring States, were approved in the past budgets, but very meagre amount was allocated for the work;

(b) if so, whether Government have any time-frame for completion of these projects; and

(c) if so, the details of such projects and the reasons for very less allocation of amount to these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) There are two new rail line projects in progess connecting